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JANET NAPOLITANO, GOVERNOR
CATHERINE R. EDEN, DIRECTOR

ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER 2003-01 (Emergency Measures for West Nile virus)

WHEREAS, the Director of the Department of Health Services may define and prescribe emergency measures for detecting, reporting, preventing and controlling communicable or infectious diseases or conditions if the Director has reasonable cause to believe that a serious threat to public health and welfare exists, pursuant to A.R.S. § 36-136(G); and

WHEREAS, there is a need to make the West Nile virus infection reportable as an emergency measure under the authority of A.R.S. § 36-136(G); and

WHEREAS, the need for the emergency measures is established by the following:

West Nile virus represents a serious threat to the public health. In 2002, there were 4,156 reported human cases of West Nile virus infection in the U.S., including 284 deaths. This was the largest documented West Nile virus meningoencephalitis outbreak in the world and the largest outbreak of meningoencephalitis in North America from any cause.

2. Arizona is one of four states in the continental U.S. not yet affected by the West Nile virus. Recent surveillance reports in New Mexico and Colorado have disclosed West Nile virus positive horses close to the Arizona border, three of which were in the Four Corners region. It is clear that the spread of the West Nile virus to Arizona is imminent.
3. Effective State and local public health response is dependent upon prompt detection of the West Nile virus, and its location of transmission. The public health response will include enhanced surveillance in areas where the West Nile virus is found and in the surrounding areas, assessment of potential mosquito breeding sites, intensification of mosquito control measures and targeted prevention educational messages to persons who may be at greatest risk for acquiring the infection or have animals at risk for infection.

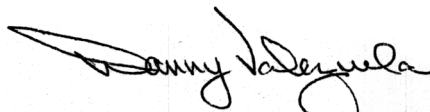
4. Effective State and local public health response is dependent upon the need to coordinate and complement existing surveillance of testing of mosquitoes, dead birds, and sentinel chickens; the reporting of horses with acute central nervous system disease to the Department of Agriculture; and the reporting of human cases of viral meningitis and encephalitis.
5. In July 2003, blood banks in Arizona and throughout the country have begun screening blood from donors for the first time, due to the risk of West Nile virus transmission via blood transfusion.
6. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists, and blood bank representatives have prepared a guidance document to help prevent, detect and control an outbreak of the West Nile virus infection. The emergency measures are needed to come into compliance with that strategy.
7. The emergency measures are needed to insure the sharing of patient confidential information related to this non-reportable disease by physicians, laboratories, and blood banks.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Danny Valenzuela, by virtue of the authority vested in me as the Deputy Director of the Arizona Department of Health Services, do hereby Order the following emergency measures to be adopted for detecting, reporting, preventing and controlling West Nile virus in Arizona:

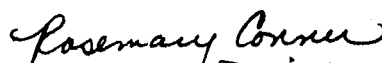
1. West Nile virus infection is added to the list of reportable conditions under R9-6-202 Special Reporting Requirements (A) [A physician or an administrator of a health care facility, shall submit a communicable disease report of a case or a suspect case of the following diseases and conditions (West Nile virus infection) within 24 hours of diagnosis to the local health agency by telephone or other equally expeditious means:].
2. West Nile virus infection is also added to R9-6-202 Special Reporting Requirements (D) [A clinical laboratory director, either personally or through a representative, shall submit to the Department a weekly written or electronic report of the following: 1. Positive laboratory findings for the following communicable disease pathogens (West Nile virus)].
3. Per R9-6-202 Special Reporting Requirements (E) The written or electronic laboratory report of West Nile virus infection shall include: Reference number; Type of specimen; Date of collection; Type of test; Test results; and Ordering physicians' name and telephone number.

4. Reports of West Nile virus infection from: (a) clinical laboratory director or authorized representatives shall be sent to the Department per R9-6-202 [Special Reporting Requirements (D)]; (b) physicians or administrators of health care facilities or authorized representatives shall be sent to the local health agency per R9-6-203 Communicable Disease Reports (A); and (c) local health agencies shall be sent to the Department per R9-6-203 Communicable Disease Reports (B, C).

I have executed this Order on this day 11th August 2003, having the authority to do so under Arizona Law.


DEPUTY DIRECTOR

ON this 11th day of August, 2003, Danny Valenzuela, Deputy Director of the Arizona Department of Health Services signed and acknowledged this document in my presence.


Assistant Director
Public Health Services
Arizona Department of Health Services